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MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY:—DANIEL SCHLESINGER.

[FROM THE NEW YORK MIRROR.]

[Concluded from page 342.]

It was on the sixth of October, 1836, that the good ship President brought Daniel Schlesinger to these shores, where, had Listz landed on that day, we question if he would have found any one to recognise him in so flattering a manner. He would have found a public exclusively attached to vocal, and comparatively ignorant of instrumental music; in whom his marvelous powers would have excited but little enthusiasm. In vain would he have striven against Madame Caradori Allan, or competed with Mr. Russell. He might have summoned around him a few choice artists, and have produced Hummel's *Concertos*, his *Septuor*, or Weber's magnificent *Concert Stück*, but his ardor would have been frozen, if not by the indifference of his hearers, by their scanty numbers. Accustomed to the homage of the Parisian *élite*, he would have been disappointed at finding himself an object of no *empressement*, and his profession an inferior one in public estimation.

Were he to visit us to-day, after a lapse of three years, he would encounter a far different reception; would be courted and admired, and command an abundant audience; with warmth of feeling heightening in proportion as he disclosed to them the great masterpieces; whilst their susceptibility to musical impressions would atone for their want of discernment. We forbear to enhance the picture, and yet cannot but believe he would, moreover, find both

character and concert among the members of his profession, and feel that, henceforth, it only depends upon themselves to render it an honorable one in this free land.

His first appearance was at the National Theatre, on a benefit night, when his performance created little sensation amidst the histrionic parade, and, though nothing so beautiful as the *variations* upon the *march in Tancredi* had been heard on this side of the Atlantic, produced no *retentissement* in our circles. By degrees, however, it became known to a few lovers of music that there was "one Pianist more;" and we must do our amateurs the justice to say that, at various *réunions*, his talent soon came to elicit their unfeigned admiration.

It was on such an occasion, one evening in the winter of 1836, that our ears were first gladdened, at the abode of a German patriarch, by the sonorous inspirations of Mr. Schlesinger. The impression is ineffaceable. We were entirely unprepared to meet such an artist out of Europe; where, in the course of a long and earnest pilgrimage, we had worshiped at every musical shrine that lay in, or near, our path; which he had never crossed, as our stay in London had been brief and in the unmusical season, and the enthusiasm of the British metropolis is periodical. Excited by the brilliancy of his variations from *Tancredi* we hastened to make the acquaintance of the modest artist; with whom a few minutes conversation convinced us he was no ordinary man. His expressive countenance was marked by character and genius; his forehead, broad and lofty, with significant expansions, rose above brilliant and remarkably prominent eyes which pierced you as you spoke—not with cunning to penetrate your motive, for he was childlike,—but to divine your meaning. His features were muscular, collected in their repose, and singularly playful in their animation. "His soul seemed made up of harmony; and he never spoke but he charmed his hearer, not only with the clearness of his reason, but all his words, and his very tone and cadences were strangely-musical." His manner was polished without affectation, and reflected upon you his self-respect; his address gentle and his person gentlemanly. He was of moderate stature, compactly built; black curly hair surmounted his white brow and harmonized with his dark complexion. Owing to great near-sightedness his countenance often took an anxious cast, and it was difficult to say what those broad eyes were gazing at until their smile lit upon you, and warmed you like a sunbeam, or they opened still wider to interrogate you. His use of English was easy and faultless, and his humor required earnest conversation. Therefore was he troublesome to the frivolous, suffering no word to pass unnoticed; and was never satisfied as long as an equivocal remark remained unexplained. Was not this an *original man*?

In the course of the above evening, he was invited by two ladies

to extemporize upon the piano. Each furnished a theme, and left him to choose between "*Lützow's Wild Hunt*," and "*The Rhine*." He took his seat before the instrument, and, after a majestic prelude, opened the great Rhine chorus; then commenced a series of variations of the highest brilliancy and most finished execution, pursued the air through many a hazardous modulation and intricate measure until the time changed, the tone softened, the chorus seemed winding off in the distance—you questioned your ears? Is that "*The Rhine*?" No! "Tis the hunt of Lützow the free and the brave." A burst of applause welcomed "the chase," as its swelling tones came nearer and nearer, until they poured upon the ear their jet of notes and martial rhythm, and made the heart leap with joy. On, on, he carried us with the hunt, which serpentine through harmonic mazes and leaped from measure to measure until his left hand, gaining fast upon the right, compelled it to slacken its wild pace and sounded—heaven knows how it was accomplished! the Rhine, the Rhine, the Hunt still resounding, and the dissimilar melodies flowed harmoniously in one silver stream—to their journey's end.

Mr Schlesinger's performance, and the pleasure it afforded us on that memorable evening, were types of the talent he displayed and the delight he gave on many a subsequent occasion. We had then never witnessed an impromptu so alive with inspiration, so spontaneous, so opulent in harmony, which enhanced instead of stifling the free flow of melody; and its novelty heightened the zest of our gratification. It was musical eloquence, poetry, genius. Nothing embarrassed him. He defied all keys, all measures, and was truly admirable. He never hesitated or paused, but went on as if an angel were holding before him a bright page which he hastened to interpret before it melted away.

These improvisations were deemed, by many, his brightest excellence. They were unlike his compositions and could not be recalled. The night after one of them, you might give him the same theme, and listen in vain for the exquisite variation you longed to hear once more. His mood, and with it his view of the subject, had changed; but they who never heard him cannot realize with how lavish a hand he poured forth the treasures of his art. To-night he would compose with *non piu Andrai* a waltz, in which the left hand played the air one beat behind the right, so that on whichever side of the piano you stood, the melody was distinctly audible; next week pour forth a brilliant fantasia upon Don Juan with two and at times even three of the airs of that inimitable opera simultaneously wooing the ear. We recollect his once harmonizing the American with the English national air so that they seemed to appertain to each other; and yet the imagination may be challenged to paint two more opposite melodies than Yankee Doodle and God Save the King.

One summer's evening in 1837, two distinguished artists, *premiers prix* of the Parisian *conservatoire*, came to hear him play. He asked them for a theme, about which, they hesitating, he chose the chirp of the cricket that was heard through the open window, and played upon it during three hours a series of variations so novel, strange and abundant, so wild and yet so closely embroidered around the subject, as to dismiss them equally astounded at his talent, and perplexed to know why such an artist should bury himself here.

Of his playing we may here remark that his touch was of singular force and ease and his tone of the richest quality. He played with extended fingers, and it was wonderful to see the self-possession with which they sported among the black and white keys. He had a beautiful hand for the piano, which he never placed on the key-board without spanning a *tenth*. This gave his chords a plentitude and grandeur that made it seem another instrument.

We have said Mr. Schlesinger landed in our city on the sixth of October, 1836. Need we recapitulate the too familiar events of the last three years, to show how unpromising a prospect of employment he encountered at his arrival. During the winter he numbered but three pupils. Besides the scarcity of money, the price of his instruction deterred many from employing him, who thought what was customary in London and Paris—exorbitant at New York. He never abated his terms, (\$3,00 a lesson,) and, as we shall shortly see, had subsequently no reason to be dissatisfied with his share of patronage.

His fourth public appearance was in a concert which he gave at the City Hotel on the twenty-fourth of November of the same year. The musical world, enthralled by a new vocalist, assembled in small numbers to listen to Hummel's splendid *Concerto in A Minor*, which, with Thalberg's *Fantasia* upon the "Capuletti and Montechi," and a beautiful solo by Boucher, were the evening's chief amusements. His having been the first to introduce here the music of Hummel and Thalberg, were of itself a merit, and deserves a record in the musical annals of a new land—as much as the early representations of the legitimate drama.

A concert he was encouraged to give at the "Stuyvesant Institute," on the twenty-first of March, 1838, met with better success than any of Mr. Schlesinger's previous efforts to please the public. His *Quatuor*, two movements of which were played and well received, was first introduced here on this occasion. He little thought its echoes would next mingle with the tones of his requiem. This, with Thalberg's *Fantasia* upon *Don Juan*, and Weber's "Invitation to Dance," constituted his share of the programme; but the evening was marked by an unexpected and characteristic trait. On entering the room a mourning card was placed in our hands. It purported that, "intelligence having been that day received of the

death of Ferdinand Ries, his ancient master, Mr. Schlesinger begged permission of his auditors to open the concert with the "*Marcia Funebre* of Beethoven's Sonata in *A flat*, as a slight tribute to his memory." It was a touching circumstance ; the voice of Beethoven summoned to mourn his only disciple, by one who has since joined them both in Paradise !

From this period, up to the opening of last winter, the flow of our artist's existence was smooth and uneventful. He had acquired many warm friends ; and now counted pupils sufficient to give a tone to his life and hopes. He never failed to inspire those who knew him with a lasting respect, alike for himself, his talent, and the art it illustrated. Over many he exercised a singular control, for no one that saw forgot him. To such as have followed his path thus far, the causes of this influence will be no longer a secret. His was an uncommon union of attributes. A wonderful artist, whose talent was spontaneous ; a man whose firmness was only surpassed by his rectitude, and whose modesty equaled his self-respect ; cheerful without effort, and winning without familiarity—neither stooping to offer nor to receive adulation—each trait in his character bore testimony to the earnest single-heartedness that had carried him through life. You felt that he was an exalted being ; incapable of a sordid action or unworthy thought ; whose motives would bear exposing, nor discredit a child's simplicity.

Signor Rapetti, passing last winter in New York, reaped the benefit of that increased liking for instrumental music, which we may, without injustice to any one, ascribe to Mr. Schlesinger's ardent efforts. Three brilliant concerts were successively given in mid winter by that exquisite violinist, by our artist, and by Signora Maroncelli, and were attended with enthusiasm. Mr. Schlesinger was conspicuous in each, and gladly coöperated with Mr. Scharfenberg, a youthful pianist of distinguished abilities, in displaying the rich resources of their common instrument.

Early in the winter he had been judiciously called to direct and instruct the *Concordia*, whose members received a sound and vigorous impulse from his indomitable energy and patience. At their tri-weekly rehearsals he was the impersonation of musical science. No defect, however trifling, could escape his tutored and sensitive ear. The perseverance with which he sought to teach, and they to learn, was alike creditable to his scholars and himself. Sometimes, after making them sing over their parts severally until they knew them, he would have a chorus repeated six or seven times. This triple conscience of what was due to his pupils, to his art, and to himself, rendered his lessons painful to the idle and careless learner. He admitted of *no small defects*, and exacted as rigid an observance of trifles as of the most important rules. His lessons were the instillation of the precepts of a Cultus, and greatly exhausted him. He undertook to direct a pupil's mind as well as his

fingers, to teach expression as well as dexterity ; and where the intelligence happens to be small, or badly educated, what task can be more irksome ?

He would take pleasure in accompanying his boy, a noble child, three years old, as he sang some popular tune ; and seek in vain to puzzle him by modulating the air in different keys, whither the little fellow's voice followed him, unconsciously. This child, and his little sister had to welcome a new brother in the fall of 1838. The young stranger thrived famously, and bade fair to surpass the other two in beauty. The father's heart wound itself about that child with extraordinary tenderness. The little being seemed of another type than his predecessors. When therefore he fell ill last spring, Mr. Schlesinger shared in his every pang, and, as the child faded, he too seemed to pine away. One night in May the little sufferer was promised a speedy relief from his pain. That same night the *Concordia* gave a public musical *soirée*, at which their leader's presence was indispensable. The poor artist tore himself away from his dying infant, in whom a holy hope seemed about to perish ; and officiated throughout the entertainment with a serene brow but an anguished heart. It became his duty in the course of the evening to accompany Uhland's ballad of the "Wirthin Töchterlein," in which occurs the line—

"Mein Töchterlein liegt auf der Todtenbahr."

My child, she lies upon her Bier.

One bitterer pang was reserved for him that night than to hear this knell of his dying child—to see it expire before morning. From this shock, broken-hearted, he never recovered ; and if the seeds of disease were already in him, for his strength had been oozing away insensibly for some months past, this developed them rudely. A few weeks changed him sadly ; his features sank and his walk became slow and painful. Still he persisted in giving lessons, and maintaining his own cheerfulness, made every effort to reassure his wife. He confessed "that the child's death had affected him terribly," but declared "he himself was well, quite well, and only suffered a little from the heat." Alas ! woman's affection cannot be long deceived : and the mournful strains his piano breathed forth when he pressed the keys, betrayed to her listening ear the secret he had resolved to yield up to the great conqueror Death alone.

On Wednesday evening, the thirtieth of May, his friends, Boucher and Kieckhoefer, brought Mr. Halma, the violinist, to assist at their weekly Trio ; which, after a long desire to assemble two or three together in the name of Beethoven, our artist had recently succeeded in organizing. The little knot, which might have become the nucleus of a future Philharmonic, promised themselves

great pleasure in the uninterrupted observance of this rite. But, on this occasion, Schlesinger was unable to officiate. Those fingers, once so alert and energetic, suddenly became powerless, and refused to do the soul's bidding. Exhausted by the effort he had made to take part in a single movement of one of Beethoven's trios, he lay down upon the sofa; and his comrades withdrew, with sad forebodings. He never woke those echoes more.

He died in the night of the eighth of June, and was buried, the Sunday after, in the Marble Cemetery, whither his mortal remains were followed by his friends and his Brothers of the Concordia, who sang a requiem over his grave.

MUSICAL FESTIVALS.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN FOR THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.]

However great may be the performances of the opera, or the merits of the chapels of princes, or of the orchestras of the cities; they will generally neglect the serious, majestic music of the great Oratorios; or will perform the great master-pieces of Bach, Handel, Graun, Haydn, and others in this line, with accommodations and abbreviations, and thus spoil them. It is very rare, too, that the means of a single chapel are sufficient to produce that effect, in bringing out those compositions, which the composers intended; for, the most of them, though most excellent in themselves, require, for their proper effect, a mass of means of execution, which is seldom found united in one place. This was felt, soon after this kind of composition was introduced by Handel; and the desire to give to their performance all the effect of which the works were capable, induced some musical societies to unite for this purpose, assisted by a great number of single individuals, amateurs and professional men; and thus to bring out the great Oratorios in all their power and beauty. These performances were, from their first beginning, called *musical festivals*. And they are festivals; giving proof, in whatever form, or time, or manner they may exist, of a high sense for true and genuine musical art, of a refined and noble taste, and of a truly national union of the inhabitants of different and even distant cities; and never failing of their effect in the elevation and cultivation of the mind, even to kindling a noble national pride, and a true public spirit.

If we do not reckon the musical games of ancient times, we

must award the palm of originating these grand enterprises to England; a country, which, in other respects, never exhibited any great preëminence in the cultivation of music. Since Handel's death, this country has annually held a festival to his memory at Westminster Abbey, in London; where an Oratorio of his composition was performed by an orchestra and choir of from 600 to 800 persons. London was for a long time the only place where these musical festivals took place; but they were afterwards got up also in some of the provincial towns; and in 1836, there were, within a short space of time, four great musical festivals in England, at Manchester, Norwich, Worcester, and Liverpool; each of them lasting for several days, and assisted by the greatest musical talent in the world, such as Malibran, De Beriot, Cramer, Dragonetti, Caradori Allan, Moralt, and others.

The example of England was first followed by Switzerland, in which country the Swiss Musical Union, of which the late Mr. Naegeli was the soul, got up such festivals in the chief cities of the German cantons. These, however, were of course very inferior in point of the numbers and talents engaged, to the English, and even to the later German festivals.

The first step in this movement in Germany, was taken in 1810, by the music director Bischof in Heildesheim, who got up a festival at Frankenhausen, in Thuringia, where he was then Cantor. After the downfall of Napoleon and the succeeding peace, these festivals were revived in Hamburg in 1816, by Louisa Reichardt, daughter of the well known composer, who was assisted by Clasing and the amateurs of all the neighboring towns, in the performance of some of Handel's Oratorios. These were repeated in other towns, and very soon throughout Germany, from time to time, in greater or less splendor and number of performers.

These performances are, however, only made possible by well conducted schools for musical practice, giving great attention to the performance of the grand church music. These in Germany are partly public institutions, as the school of St. Thomas, in Leipzig, and many teachers' seminaries; partly smaller or larger choirs, as those in Brunswick, Halle, Heildesheim, &c.; partly private associations, of which the most eminent are that of Schelble in Frankfort, and Naegeli's singing school in Zurich.

The other countries followed but slowly the examples thus brilliantly set them. France had its first musical festival in 1830, in

Strasburg, by the Musical Association of the Alsace; and which was only repeated in 1836. Next came Hungary, where the Presburg Church Music Society gave annually large concerts of this kind. The Holland Musical Society gave its first musical festival in 1834, at the Hague, and its second in 1836, at Amsterdam. Simon Mayr got up the first festival in Italy in 1835, at Bergamo, on St. Cecilia's day. And lastly in Russia, in 1836, a number of musicians from Mietau, Dorpat, Liebau, Pernau, Wolmar and Revel, assembled at Riga for a festival of several days, which opened with Schneider's Last Judgment.

It is very certain that many a splendid composition, which already slumbered forgotten on some dusty shelf, has been revived by these festivals, to the admiration of the hearers; as well as that they have given birth to many valuable modern compositions of this kind, which without them would not have been conceived at all, or at least, not in that grandeur. They have thus had a great practical influence, besides the general one which we have mentioned above; and they have therefore found great encouragement among the professional men, and the greatest masters of our time have undertaken to conduct them, such as Spohr, Schneider, Lindpaintner, Ries, Spontini, and others.

[There are a few errors in regard to facts in the foregoing article, for the correction of which, we refer the reader to the article in our last on Festivals in England. Edrs.]

MOZART'S 'MAGIC FLUTE.'

[TRANSLATED FROM A GERMAN LETTER FOR THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.]

This opera has been brought out anew within a few years, in a new and splendid garb, as regards decorations, costume and machinery; and the expense of fire and water, clouds, palace of the sun, bridges breaking down, and other requisites, was so great, that, to cover it in some degree, the opera was given for two years without subscribers using their privilege. But the charm of this *very old* opera, (for how many operas are there, that live for thirty years and more?) was so great, that the house was continually filled, and the patience of subscribers was not exhausted. It is true, a rich dress is required for this work of art; but if stage managers would bring out *none but*

"*magic flutes*" thus splendidly, they certainly would not get poor by their speculations.

For, Mozart is that genius who has created the age of Pericles in music, and closed it again by his early death. With his works the publishers may boldly abandon their old unworthy policy, by adding the year of publication on the title page: every body knows and loves Mozart, and will continue to like him; and even the French print his name quite correctly.

I went into the house in the quiet expectation of hearing again the beautiful music, which I had heard so often before, that my memory had retained it faithfully in all its parts; and the charms of unexhausted novelty touched my heart. How even those hackneyed melodies, which every barrel organ had given us even to disgust, surprised me by their beauty! They bloomed afresh in their right places in the drama, heard in their connection with the whole. What an eventful poem, what power of representation! These tones actually picture; they give color: it is heard and seen at the same time *what* is doing and by *whom* it is doing: the tones are blended together with the situation and character. In Sarastro's airs and in the Choruses of the priests, does not the purest language of deep wisdom flow forth, cleared from all the passions? We cannot mistake it: in a calm world of consecrated priests only are *such* tones sung. Listen on the other hand to the *Queen of the night*, half delineated in the songs of her veiled *ladies*. Magnificently and proudly her song begins, alluring to the youth whom she wants to gain over to her side, and ornamented by the tinsel of female vanity. Breathing vengeance, torn by all the darkest passions, commanding as mother and queen, does she appear in the second air. Only a star-crowned queen can sing these airs. How delicately and nobly is the love of the pure youth delineated; how well his firmness in his trials!—what breath of innocence and abandonment to her feelings, lives in the tones of Pamina! Is not the whole buoyant and gay sensuality of the feathered bird-catcher rendered fresh and serene in his melodies? And to whom else can those celestial songs of the *genii* belong, but these ethereal beings? Let their theatrical wings be affixed ever so awkwardly, we *hear* how easy the zephyr carries them, and that they belong to a fairy land. How, in fine, is there spread over the *whole* a spray of colors, and a delicate fragrance, which transport us to the world of fairies!

There are instances of the same opera being composed by different

composers, twice, thrice, even four times; every time differently, and well conceived by each composer. Try this with one of Mozart's Operas. Here the chemical affinity of the tones to the *situation*, the *character* and the *words* is so great, that their connection is *indissoluble*. Mozart has rendered the whole man and his situation so deeply and at the same time so individually, that his music is the only *true* one; while any different one would only be like a common exchange cloak for the feelings expressed. Play any dramatic song of Mozart's on an instrument, and you will not doubt that this song belongs to a definite person in a definite situation or action. It will be *human language*, even on the instrument. Sing, on the other hand, other opera melodies, even with their words; how often will they appear only as *instrumental music*, played on the human throat. It is impossible that Mozart should have invented or whistled to himself the least part of his dramatic music, before the character, the situation, the words, had been before his mind. Others carry their heads full of opera music; only the subjects are wanting.

There are people who still seriously pretend, that the words are of no consequence in an opera; and I have wondered why they have not proved their superfluity by Mozart's music, which might be understood even *without* the words, because *he* has understood and felt them so well. But then they were with him not a mere thread to string *ready made* beads on. For this reason also is it so difficult to fill the parts of Mozart's operas well; for he does not demand the throat only, but the whole man.

ON ARRANGEMENTS.

In order that a piece of music may appear and be estimated as a work of art, and especially according to the conception of its author, it can only be presented in exactly the same form and with the same attendant circumstances, in which the composer conceived it. On this form and these circumstances, indeed, the individuality and absolute as well as relative merits of the piece are founded. In every essential alteration, the intended impression of the whole, as well as the particular impression of the parts, is necessarily weakened, and may be altogether destroyed. The more will this be the case, according as the composer has chosen the means of attaining his object the more justly and with the greater talent.

We set great value on having an opera or any other large composition conducted at its performance by its composer; or, where this is impossible, we make great account of having the time of each movement, as designed by the author, marked by a chronometer or metronome, that we may the better catch the composer's idea.

It would not be easy to imagine an arrangement of a Duett or Trio into a whole opera; though it would be more meritorious to make something of nothing, than nothing of something.

These premises are so self-evident and so generally understood, that we should think no honest musician would undertake to turn an opera, like Mozart's *Magic Flute*, or Cherubini's *Faniska*, and others, into Duetts for two flutes, or two violins, or one guitar, the text or words being thrown away.

There are certainly some kinds of arrangements, which, though they unavoidably weaken the full effect of the piece, are yet useful and even important; as in cases where the work, in its original form, would be but little known, and perhaps not at all. We refer to arrangements of operas for the pianoforte, and of Symphonies for a smaller orchestra. Such works are, in this form, accessible to a far greater number of the lovers of good music; and without them they could only be enjoyed by those who lived in the largest cities. Neither do they, in this way, altogether lose their original character.

But to arrange every thing off-hand, into every possible shape, and for every possible instrument, ought no longer to be tolerated. Such arrangements often exhibit a piece only in caricature. Think of arranging Macbeth, the Merchant of Venice, or the School for Scandal, for four or two or one speaker; every one sees that the character of these plays is lost. The different personages in a drama are not more necessary to the development and understanding of the whole, than are the different voices and instruments in their proper relations in a large musical composition. Our readers probably recollect the story of the traveling manager, who advertised to perform Shakspeare's tragedy of Hamlet in one of the large country towns in England; and when the curtain rose, informed his audience, that in consequence of the sudden indisposition of the principal actor, the piece would go on with the trifling omission of the character of Hamlet: the application to this matter of arrangements is not inappropriate.

SINGING OF BIRDS.

[FROM THE JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST.]

The singing of most birds seems entirely a spontaneous effusion, produced by no exertion, or occasioning no lassitude in muscle, or relaxation of the parts of action. In certain seasons and weather, the nightingale sings all day, and most part of the night; and we never observe that the powers of song are weaker, or that the notes become harsh and untunable, after all these hours of practice. The song-thrush, in a mild, moist April, will commence his tune early in the morning, pipe unceasingly through the day, yet, at the close of eve, when he retires to rest, there is no obvious decay of his musical powers, or any sensible effort required to continue his harmony to the last. Birds of one species sing in general very like each other, with different degrees of execution. Some counties may produce finer songsters, but without great variation in the notes. In the thrush, however, it is remarkable that there seems to be no regular notes, each individual piping a voluntary of his own. Their voices may always be distinguished amid the choristers of the copse, yet some one performer will more particularly engage attention by a peculiar modulation or tune; and should several stations of these birds be visited the same morning, few or none probably will be found to persevere in the same round of notes; whatever is uttered seeming the effusion of the moment. At times a strain will break out perfectly unlike any preceding utterance, and we may wait a long time without noticing any repetition of it. Harsh, strained, and tense, as the notes of this bird are, yet they are pleasing from their variety. The voice of the blackbird is infinitely more mellow, but has much less variety, compass, or execution; and he too commences his carols with the morning light, persevering from hour to hour without effort, or any sensible faltering of voice.—The cuckoo wearies us throughout some long May morning with the unceasing monotony of its song; and, though there are others as vociferous, yet it is the only bird I know that seems to suffer from the use of the organs of voice. Little exertion as the few notes it makes use of seem to require, yet, by the middle or end of June, it loses its utterance, becomes hoarse, and ceases from any further essay.

EFFECT OF MUSIC IN THE CONVERSION OF SAVAGES.

Nolrega (a Jesuit) had a school, where he instructed the native children, the orphans from Portugal, and the *mestizos*, or mixed breed. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught them; they

were trained to assist at mass, and *to sing* the church service, and frequently led in procession through the town. This had a great effect, for the natives were passionately fond of music, so passionately, that Nolrega began to hope the fable of Orpheus was a type of his mission, and that by songs he was to convert the pagans of Brazil. This Jesuit usually took with him four or five of these little choristers on his preaching expeditions; when they approached an inhabited place, one carried the crucifix before them, and they began singing the Litany. The savages, like snakes, were won by the voice of the charmer; they received him joyfully, and when he departed with the same ceremony, the children followed the music. He set the catechism, creed, and ordinary prayers to *sol fa*; and the pleasure of learning to sing was such a temptation, that the little Tupis sometimes ran away from their parents to put themselves under the care of the Jesuit. [*Southey's History of Brazil.*]

ANCIENT MUSIC.

The Egyptian flute was only a cow's horn with three or four holes in it, and their harp or lyre had only three strings; the Grecian lyre had only seven strings, and was very small, being held in one hand; the Jewish trumpets that made the walls of Jericho fall down, were only ram's horns; their flute was the same as the Egyptian; they had no other instrumental music but by percussion, of which the greatest boast made was the psaltery, a small triangular harp or lyre with wire strings and struck with an iron needle or stick; their sacbut was something like a bagpipe; the timbrel was a tambourine; and the dulcimer was a horizontal harp, with wire strings, and struck with a stick like the psaltery. They had no written music; had scarcely a vowel in their language;* and yet (according to Josephus) had two hundred thousand musicians playing at the dedication of the temple of Solomon. Mozart would have died in such a concert in the greatest agonies! [*Dr. Burney's Hist. of Music*, vol. i. p. 249.]

THE CONCERTS.

The concert season has fairly commenced; and has opened very auspiciously, as regards the number of concerts given and the attendance at them.

We mentioned two miscellaneous concerts of the Handel and

* This is not true: though the Hebrew language has few vowel letters, yet the vowel sounds are expressed by points. Edrs.

Haydn Society in a former number ; and they have since given two repetitions of the Oratorio of *David*, in general in their usual style. We might perhaps except the opening chorus for four choirs at the second performance, which was given with more of precision than formerly : in other respects, the performance of the oratorio is much the same as in former years. Mrs. Franklin's variation in the recitative preceding the Triumphal Chorus, closing with the words,

"Haste we to meet them, and rejoice before them,"

running up to the seventh on the syllable *be*, and then falling to the key note, is not a happy one. We must, however, do her the credit to say, that she sang the Recitative,

"Though in fulfilment of his royal word, &c.,"

in a manner that united fine expression of feeling with good execution of the music. The harp accompaniment makes apparently too much labor to be effective ; and especially in the first song in which it is used, it should be much more subdued.

Mr. Kendall and the Brigade Band have given two concerts, which exhibited the noisy but popular attraction of the brass instruments, and were attended by large and apparently delighted audiences. We cannot speak favorably of brass bands in the concert room : in the open air, if well played, they are truly beautiful.

The most attractive entertainment to persons of a cultivated musical taste, and probably the finest musical treat of the kind ever offered in Boston, was the concert of Mr. Rakemann, on Monday evening, November 4. This gentleman came among us well recommended, as being thorough master of the modern pianoforte school, and of the compositions of its authors and leaders, Thalberg, Henselt and Chopin. His performance is the first illustration of the style of this school which has ever been offered to the Boston public. His command over the instrument is truly wonderful. Whatever task he gives his fingers they seem to perform as by instinct, notwithstanding its difficulty. At one time it might be a shake for two fingers of one hand, while the other two fingers and thumb of the same hand are playing around them ; at another, a bold run in octaves for both hands, through the whole extent of the instrument : again it is the quickest passage in semiquavers *allegro assai* for the

right hand ; while the left is playing quaver triplets, extending the *arpeggio* to the tenth, and yet the little finger of the left holds out the key note : and now a melody is played *forte*, in the middle, or indeed, in any part of the instrument, by the powerful exertion of the muscles of one finger ; while all the others are playing an accompaniment all over the instrument, in *mezzo* or *piano*. The muscles which he uses in playing are those of the fingers, hand and wrist, and scarcely at all those of the arms : the muscles of each finger are so fully exercised and developed as to render it entirely independent of the others in its action, so that each seems to be endued with an individual life ; and this is what enables him to produce all the various effects with such smoothness and beauty. Every note comes out round and distinct, and in expression exactly what the master intended. At the same time he makes a new use of the pedal, which greatly increases the power of the expression : he has a method of bringing the pedal to bear upon each note, as he wants it. In short, he develops the character of each piece in its true light ; and while we receive new conceptions of the works of the most modern composers, we are not less delighted with his delineations of the compositions of Hertz and Beethoven. Hertz's variations had a grace thrown around them which was truly charming ; and Beethoven shone, in the grandeur of his ideas, and the beauty of his art in working them out. His accompaniment of the violin was eminently well managed and effective. His organ-playing also, and especially his management of the pedals, showed his skill on that instrument. His audience, for a first and single performance, to the credit of the Boston public be it said, was much larger than could have been expected, especially considering the times ; and it was noticed by many as being the most select and discriminating ever recollected in the city.

The Hungarian singers are giving concerts every night. Their imitations of instruments are a novel and singular exhibition, and in some pieces, pleasing. Some of their quartetts and songs are very agreeable ; but the whole is a style of music which cannot continue to please long after the attraction of novelty has worn off.

Mr. Garbett brought out his Oratorio last night, assisted by several members of the different musical societies and by amateurs : we shall speak of it in a future number.

Miss Shirreff has announced a concert.